A short and an absolute order of confession most requisite of all persons to be ouer loked before they confesse them.

HAuing treated before of contrition, we will heare likewise shew a way how they should prepare & examine themselues, which often vse to be confessed: of whome many are combred, with gnawing scruples, for that they narrowly gropinge euery corner of their conscience, sometymes can finde nothing wherof to accuse themselues: whereby in the one side they knowinge

well, that they are not nor cānot be without the common spots of human imbecillitie: and not on the other side, findinge them, at the tyme when they should be cleansed of them, are in great disquiet & anguish of mynd, fearing ỹ they are neuer rightly cōfessed.

Of this two causes may be alleaged, the one bicause it is very hard for a man to know himselfe in deade, and to serch throughly all the secret places of his conscience, according to this sayinge of ỹ prophet, Psal 18. who knoweth his excesses? O Lord deliuer me from my hydden offences.

The

The other cause is for that the faults of the iust, who (as Salomon sayth, Prou.24. Fall seuen tymes a daye) are rather the faults of omitting good thinges, then of committing euil. But for the playner explication hereof, it is euident, that all offences are commissiue or omissiue, that is either by committinge robbery, murder, or other dishonesty, or els by omittinge and neglectinge his dutie, in louing GOD, in fasting, in prayiug. &c.

Now of these two sortes of sinz whereas the first consisteth in actiõ, are very easy to be known:

but the ether not consistinge in doing but in not doing, are moze difficult, foz that which is not cannot be decerned: and bicause the vertuous people syldome fall into these actuall offences: and the faultes of omission are harde to perceaue: Hense aryseth that they knowe not whereof to bee confessed, which so much afflicteth them.

But foz the ease of suche persons I haue compose this briefe memoziall, wherein these kynde of sinnes, (I meane the faultes of omission) are chiefely treated of.

And

And for that theſe offences are either againſt god, or againſt our ſelues, or againſt our neighbour: For this cauſe I haue deuided them into three partes, wherein theſe three ſortes of negligences ſhalbe ſpoken of: which ſometymes be not veniall ſinnes: yet they be alwayes imperfections: and may full oft be venial offences.

For thoſe that deſyre to be perfect, muſt accuſe themſelues of theſe thinges, yet not alwayes but ſometymes, chiefely at the principall feaſtes.

Here foloweth the memoriall.

After that the penitent hath vttered the generall confession, before he enter into the perticuler rehersall of his offences, let hym accuse him selfe of these foure thinges folowing.

First for that he came to this sacrament, not prepared as he ought to bée: and for not vsinge sufficient diligence in the examynacion of his conscience.

Secondly, let him accuse himselfe bicause he hath not such sorow & repentaunce for his offences:

ces: and because he hath not that firme & ful intent to leaue them as is requisite.

Thirdly, for that he did not receiue the dreadfull sacrament of the aulter with that puritie of conscience and deuotion as was conuenient: and for that after communion he was not so sober as he should haue beene.

Fourthly, let him blame himselfe, for not hauing trauayled diligently in the amendment of his lyfe: and for not proceedinge and profeting dayly in vertue & seruice of GOD: but rather to haue cõtinewed still in one kinde of lasse

An absolute order,
of lasie slouthfulnesse, and perchaunce to haue reuoulted backwarde. After this, he may begin to accuse him selfe according to the direction that enlueth.

Towards God.

TOwardes God we ought to haue these three theologicall vertues which are Faith, Hope, and Charitie. In euery of these he maye accuse him selfe as followeth.

Cõcerning charitie, for not hauig loued

loued God, wyth all his harte, and with hys soule, as was bounde to doe: But hath setled his affection in the disordered loue of creatures, and of the vanitie of this worlde, forgettinge his creator altogeither.

Concerning fayth, for not beleueing so firmely as hee ought: And for not endeuoring spædely to repell, vayne thoughts and suggestions of the Dyuell tending to destroy or to weaken his fayth.

Concerning charytie, let hym blame hym selfe, if in any hys troubles græfes or necessities, he

hath not reposed his sure hope & confidence in his saviour and if hee hath labored ouer earnestly with his body and mynde to bee ridde of his miserie: For that it proceedeth of lytle hope.

Concerning the puritie of intẽtion. For not performing the seruice of God, for the onely respect of his loue as in dutye hee was bounde: But for that hee hath done it somtymes for hys priuate auayle, somtymes for a custome, somtymes bycause they were conformable to his diseases &c.

Ye shoulde likewise accuse him

selfe

self to haue béene slowe in aun-
swering the diuine inspirations
of God, often resisting the worke
of the holy Ghost, this is a very
spirituall and secret sore, worthy
alway to sticke in our conscience.

In lyke naner for beinge in-
gratefull towards the benefites
of god: and for not rendring vn-
to him due thanks therefore, and
for that he hath not endeuoured
to serue and loue more earnest-
ly the giuer of al goodnesse.

Likewyse let him accuse him-
selfe, to haue forgotten his Lord,
banishing him often times out of
his harte: Whereas hée ought

to

An absolute order,
to haue hym alwayes presente and fixed before his eyes.

Concerninge patience in aduersitie, let him bethinke hymselfe if he hath not (perchaunce) abidden pacient-ye, the scourge that god hath sẽt him, & hath not receiued it mekely at his hands as a medecin, nor hath not thãked hym therefore.

Further for that hee hath not exhibited dewe deuotion to the sacred places, nor at the tyme of masse to the holy function done there. Nor to the most blessed sacrament.

Towardes

Towardes himſelfe.

A Man hath in hym many parts, he hath a body with all hys membersand ſences, a ſoule with all his appetites,and a ſpirit wyth all hys poweres, that is vnderſtanding, memory, and will: and ſo may tranſgreſſe the rule and order he ought to obſerue in euery of theſe

Firſt then let hym accuſe himſelfe, for not dealing wyth his body, wyth ſuch rigour and ſeuerytie as was conuenient, as well in meate, drinke, apparell

and

and sleape, as in al other things: Yea, for cherishinge hys bodye two delycately, and for beinge ouer fauourable to himselfe.

For not restraining his imagination and other sences orderly: But rather wilfullye to suffer them to wander abrod, hearing, seeing, speaking, and imagining, sundrie idle and friuolus toyes, al which after resorting agayne vnto thy memory, doe cause him to be distracted in his prayers.

Let him also accuse himselfe, for not hauing mortified his appetites, nor wrastled with his will so violently as hee myght

haue

haue done, yea, for the folowing and fulfilling thereof in euery degrée: And for that he is not ſo humble in hart and déed as is requiſite: and for that hée doeth not accoumpt hymſelfe ſo vyle and cwretched as hée is in dede, and therefore handleth not himſelfe in ſuch order as he beſt deſerueth.

Laſtly for that he is dull and neglygent in his prayers, ſometymes intermitting them altogither, to folowe ſome vayne trifle or peuiſh buſineſſe.

Towards his neighbour.

FIrst let him blame himselfe, for not bearing to his neighbour such affection as hee ought: for not releuing his neede with such fauour and helpe as he coulde and shoulde: For not hauing due compassion of his miserie, and for not praying to god for hym as was his parte.

And agayne, bycause he hath not felt so fully as hee ought, nor hath not had so hartye compassion as was due to the publycke and common calamytie of

the church, hapned bi war hereſy &c. And that he hath not commended it to God as hee myght and ſhoulde haue done.

Thoſe which haue ſuperiours ſhoulde accuſe themſelues, for not ſhewing obedience and reuerence according to their dutye: And thoſe that haue ſubiectes and children, ſhoulde accuſe thēſelues for not hauing inſtructed, chaſtened, or not prouyded for them thinges neceſſarie. And yf they haue not had ſuch care of them as was conuenient.

Concerning actiue offences.

When he hath in this ſort ac-

cused himself in ỹ faults of omis-
siō he may sodenly exhibit a like
bill of complaynt agaynst hym-
selfe composed of the crymes cal-
led cōmissiue offences, by run-
ning ouer the ten commaunde-
mentes, the seuen capitall sinns.
Blaming himself of all that his
conscience shall accuse hym in
euery of these. And if he require
a more breife way, he may take
a short and spēdy suruey. Ouer
all his thoughtes, wordes and
workes, noting his defectes, in
al these & accuse himself therof.
After all thys he must accuse
himselfe of the crymes apperte-
ning

ning to hys degrée, calling, and office, declaring that he hath don contrary to the rule and equitie of his vocation: As if he be a religious man of his tryde bowe, if he be a iudge, phiſicion, merchaunt, or lawyer, of thinges belonging to his office.

Hauing finiſhed theſe accuſations, let hym conclude his confeſſion, ſaying of all theſe offences and of all others which I haue commytted in thought, worde, and dede, I blame, I accuſe my ſelfe, and I ſaye vnto God, my faulte, my greuous guilt. And I requeſt of thée O father which

An absolute order,
heare presentest the parson of god, absolution and penaunce for them.

Of the necessitye of confession: taken out of the catechisme which was alowed by the Counsell of Trident.

NO man must thinke that our Lorde cõmaunded confession in such sorte, ꝑ we may leaue the same vndone, if wee woulde. For euery christian ought to be thus perswaded, that whosoeuer hath committed mortall sin, ought to be called backe to spirituall lyfe, by the sacra-

ment

ment of confeſsion : The which thinge is playnely ſet out, in a goodly and metophoricall ſpeech of our Sauiour, who calleth the authoritie of miniſtring this ſacrament, the keay of the kingedome of heauen. For euen as no man can come in ani place, without hym who kæpeth the kayes: So is it meant, that none doe come to heauen, if the prieſtes (to whoſe cuſtody our Lorde commytted his keyes) open not the doores. For if it were otherwiſe, it ſhoulde ſæme the church ſhuld haue had the vſe of the keyes to no purpoſe : And in vayne

shoulde he (who hath charge of the keyes) keepe men backe frõ the entraunce to heauen, if so be there were any other passage, to enter in at. And Sainct Austen hath this notable saying, he saith let no man say in his mynde: I doe secreat penaunce vnto our Lorde God, who pardoneth my offences, he knoweth my hart: If this will serue, it was spoken without cause: Whose sins you forgiue in earth, shalbe forgiuẽ in heauen. And by thys meanes the keyes were giuen the church without cause. Sainct Ambrose also wryteth to the same effect,

in

in that booke where in hee re-
fuſeth the hereſy of the Noua-
tians, who affirmed, ſ our Lorde
had reſerued to his ſelfe onely to
forgiue ſinnes . Doth he rather
honour God(ſayeth he) who o-
bayeth his miniſters or he that
withſtandeth them . God com-
maunded vs, to bee obedient to
his minyſters : Whome when
we obay, we doe honour to god
onely . If a manne bee de-
ſirous to know when he is bound
to confeſſion, let him vnderſtand,
that all ſorte of chriſtians ought
to come there vnto, when they
haue the perfect vſe of reaſon:

That is euery one is bounde to be confessed, when he is able to discerne the good from the bad: And when noughtinesse maye take rote in hym. So when a manne is come to those yeares wherein he must consider howe to obtayne eternall lyfe: so sone he is bounde to confesse his sins to a priest; whereas no man, can loke for saluation, whose conscience is poluted with sinne. The church also in the same place and Canon before recited sheweth, what time men must resort to cõfessiõ: which is, euery yeare once at the least each man muste bee confessed

confeſſed. But if we way wyth our ſelues what is expedient for our ſoule health, then doubtles, when we are in daunger of life, or whē we are about ſome thing which muſt not be done of one ỹ is infected with ſinne, (as when we either myniſter or receyue, the holy ſacramentes) ſo ofte we muſt of neceſſity vſe confeſſion. So we muſt doe alſo when wee ſtande in feare leaſt wee ſhoulde forget any ſinne: For neyther can we be cõfeſſed of thoſe things which we haue forgotten: neyther doe we obtayne of god pardon for our ſinnes: vnleſſe they

be blotted out by penaunce.

The description of confession as it is a sacrament.

THe sacrament of confession is such a kynde of accusation of our sinne, as is done to thys ende, that wee maye obtayne mercy, by the vertue of ỹ keyes. And for good cause is it called an accusation, bycause our sins are not so to be spoken of as though we bragged thereof, (as those vse to do, who reioyse when they haue done amisse) neyther are our sinnes to bee vttred in such sort,

sort, as if we tolde a tale to delyte those that heare vs talke: But our sinnes must be spoken with such a mynde, that delyts in accusing of one his selfe, and that in such sort, that we are desirous to be reuenged of our selues therefore. Our sinnes are confessed, to the ende wee maye haue forgiuenes therof: for this maner of iudgement is vnlyke to common iudgementes which concerne lyfe and death: wherin such as confesse their faultes suffer payne and punishment, & are not quytt or pardoned their fault.

After

After what ſort a godly confeſſion muſt be made.

WE muſte vſe ſuch care and diligẽce in our confeſſion as we vſe in matters of greateſt importaunce: And we ought to employ our labour in this, that we heale the woundes of our ſoule, and vttetly rote out all ſinne. True confeſſion requireth theſe conditions folowing.

1 It muſt be done wholely and perfectly: Which thing is ſo neceſſary, that whoſoeuer of purpoſe, omitteth any thing whych ought

ought to be spoken of and confes-
sed, and vtter what els hee lus-
teth, he shall not onely receyue
no commodity at all by that con-
fession : But also much increa-
seth his former offences.

2. We must not be careleſſe, or
negligently examyne our consci-
ence or to slyghtly call our faults
to mynde, as that wee maye be
worthely thought we would not
remember them at all.

3. It must be simple, bare, and
playne, and not sett out or colo-
red by art : As some vse to doe,
who rather giue reasons of their
lyfe, then confesse theire faultes

done

done in their lyke tyme.

4 Our confeſſion ought to haue in it wiſdome and ſhamefaſtnes. For we muſt not ſpend to many wordes herein, but breifely declare ſuch thinges as pertayne to nature and condicion of euery ſinne: And in ſuch ſort we muſt deale therein that modeſty be alſo ioyned there vnto.

5 Secricy is alſo neceſſary. For both the prieſt that confeſſeth & the party confeſſed, ought to do what he can, that the talke vſed in confeſſion, be ſpoken ſecretly. For ỹ which cauſe it is not lawfull for any to make confeſſoin

of his ſinnes, eyther by meſſen-
ger or by letters: for ſo nothing
ſhoulde be done ſecretly.
6 Confeſſion muſt be done very
often: For nothing ſhoulde bee
ſuch a care to a chriſtian man as
many tymes to come to confeſ-
ſion, and thereby to cleanſe and
waſh our ſoule. For when any
hath offended God in deadly ſin,
nothing can be more commody-
ous to the auoydenge of many
periles that hange ouer vs in
thys lyfe, then preſently to con-
feſſe our faultes. And whereas
ſome vſing cleanlyneſſe in appa-
rell thincke alſo that cleanlyneſſe
of

of body maketh a man to lyue the longer: It is a foule matter we ſhoulde be ſo curious in theſe thinges and not to be as carefull to waſh away the ſpottes of the ſoule.

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